



**APPROVED**

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2014  
CITY OF ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS**

The Rock Island Planning Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting in the City Hall Council Chambers at 1528 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Rock Island, Illinois. The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Levin at 5:32 PM. Present were Commissioners Michael Creger, Bruce Harding, David Levin, Jason Lopez, Diane Oestreich, Bruce Peterson, and Lorian Swanson. Commissioners Ted Johnson, Norm Moline, Kevin Nolan, and Berlinda Tyler-Jamison were absent. Also in attendance were Alan Fries, Ben Griffith and Brandy Howe. Ward 5 Alderman Kate Holte and Ward 6 Alderman Joy Murphy were also present in the audience.

**AN ORDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 8, 2014 MEETING**

The Commission considered the matter of approval of the minutes of the January 8, 2014 meeting. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Harding made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Lopez seconded the motion and the Commissioners unanimously approved said minutes.

**AN ORDER APPROVING THE WRITTEN AGENDA**

The Commission considered the matter of approval of the written agenda for the meeting. Chairman Levin stated that there was no public hearing scheduled for tonight's meeting, as was reported by the news media, and asked if there were any suggested amendments to the written agenda and hearing none, asked for a motion. Commissioner Oestreich made a motion to approve the written agenda as presented, which was seconded by Commissioner Lopez. The Commissioners then voted unanimously to approve the written agenda.

**PROCEDURAL EXPLANATION**

Chairman Levin provided a brief explanation of the public hearing procedures for the benefit of the Planning Commissioners and those in attendance.

**REVIEW OF A FINAL PLAT OF "THE MANOR OF ROCK ISLAND" SUBDIVISION LOCATED  
AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF 26<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE AND 7<sup>TH</sup> STREET**

Next there came before the Planning Commission a review of a final subdivision plat: "The Manor of Rock Island" located at the southeast corner of 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Chairman Levin asked Mr. Fries to present the staff report. Mr. Fries reviewed the staff report, providing information about the final plat, roadway changes required from the preliminary plat and the variances requested by the

applicant. He stated that the City Engineer recommended approval of the final plat, subject to provision of a performance bond or letter of credit.

Commissioner Oestreich asked about sidewalks, open space and stormwater. Mr. Fries answered that all had been provided for and met the City's requirements. Commissioner Oestreich asked about the variances requested and Mr. Fries answered that they had been detailed in the staff report.

Hearing no further questions from the Commissioners, Chairman Levin invited the applicant to step forward to address the Commission. Surveyor Steve Schmidt of MSA Professional Services stated that he didn't have much to add, explaining that the roadways were slightly reconfigured in the southwest corner of the site, due to the developers inability to purchase small piece of property to add to the project in order to make roadway connections. He stated that the variances requested were the minimum necessary to construct the proposed homes at the site.

Commissioner Oestreich asked about easements. Mr. Schmidt replied that the easements shown on the final plat were typical utility easements and that while fences could be built on an easement, a permanent structure could not. Commissioner Oestreich expressed her concerns over the backs of several homes would be facing other homes and that it bothered her. Mr. Schmidt responded that the property would be managed by the developer and felt confident that they would do so.

Gail Brooks of the Rock Island Housing Authority stated that she could answer any non-technical questions the Commissioners had about the development. None of the Commissioners had any questions for Ms. Brooks.

Hearing no further discussion, Chairman Levin asked for a motion. Commissioner Peterson made a motion to recommend approval of the final plat as requested, including the variances, and subject to a performance bond or letter of credit being submitted by the applicant. Commissioner Lopez seconded the motion and the Commissioners voted unanimously to recommend approval of the final subdivision plat to City Council.

#### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE: FOLLOW UP FROM THE FEBRUARY 25<sup>TH</sup> OPEN HOUSE AND DISCUSSION OF THE PLAN**

Next there came before the Planning Commission a discussion of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Howe provided a review of the Open House conducted on Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> at St. John's Lutheran Church on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. She stated that overall, the comments were very positive. She stated most of the discussion seemed to center on the Future Land Use Map, especially the transitional overlay areas along the 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor and a couple of parcels in the southwest part of town across the Rock River which may be floodprone.

Commissioner Oestreich asked about a comment on the questionnaire regarding storm drain areas. Commissioner Peterson suggested the Columbia Park Plan be revisited in the near future since the current development occurring there did not match what was proposed in the plan. He also asked what feedback Planning staff had received from the Aldermen. Ms. Howe replied that Mr. Harrington from Vandewalle & Associates had provided a study session to Council on January 13, 2014. Mr. Griffith added that the feedback that had been received to date from the Aldermen had been very positive of

the plan and supportive of Planning staff. Chairman Levin asked Alderman Murphy and Hotle if they had any comments and Alderman Murphy answered that she had none at the present time.

Commissioner Oestreich stated that she felt that some of the residential areas on the north side of 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue should be reviewed for the transitional overlay area, as well as areas on the west side of south 11<sup>th</sup> Street because the steep slopes located there which are not conducive to commercial development. She also stated that she had not seen the transitional overlay map before. Ms. Howe answered that the transitional overlay map was provided to the Planning Commission at the January meeting. Commissioner Peterson stated that he had concerns with the schools and that Planning staff may need to take that up with the School District staff.

Commissioner Swanson stated that she would like to see the 15<sup>th</sup> Street area around the Centennial Bridge improved since it was a gateway to the City from Iowa and compared restoration of the County Courthouse to Old Main on the Augustana College campus. She also stated her concerns about the negative image of the downtown area and the schools.

Commissioner Oestreich stated that she talked with Highland Park residents and they were concerned that the City is going to sell the property around the water tanks on 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue for development and that with all the good things going on in downtown, such as the City's assistance to Circa 21, they should also provide similar assistance to for the neighborhoods to help them. She also suggested that the City should talk to the County, the Townships and to the School Board since it seems that the City has avoided talking to them. Chairman Levin stated that the Mayor and City Manager do talk to County and Township leaders. Commissioner Swanson mentioned the upcoming referendum for the schools and the fact that the County was not seeking one for the Courthouse.

Ms. Howe asked for more specific guidance regarding revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Maps. Commissioner Peterson stated that the 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue transitional overlay boundary should stop at 24<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> Street, add some area on the west side of 30<sup>th</sup> Street between 18<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenues and include part of the Washington Jr. High school site. Commissioner Oestreich stated that it should stop at 25<sup>th</sup> Street because it is all residential and that in the past, they had only gone 3 lots deep but the map showed the entire block. Ms. Howe responded that the boundary was not intended to be a rigid line, but to be a flexible one, that the 2-3 block deep policy would be superseded by the new Comprehensive Plan policies, and that until a new zoning ordinance is adopted and codified, the Comprehensive Plan and its policies would serve as a guide for rezonings and redevelopments.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the revision of the 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue transitional overlay boundary line, primarily among Commissioners Oestreich, Peterson and Ms. Howe. Commissioner Oestreich stated that she felt the boundary should be moved to the south a couple of lots to reduce the depth towards 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, but should be expanded in the north 11<sup>th</sup> Street area around 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue because there were already small commercial areas located there and they were a good mix of uses for the residents living in the area. She also stated that the boundary should be extended to the alley located west of 30<sup>th</sup> Street between 18<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Commissioner Peterson stated that he was not advocating that any of the properties located within the transitional overlay boundaries be rezoned, but they instead showed the area as one for closer study. No other comments were received from the Commissioners.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Levin asked if anyone in the audience would like to provide public comments. Alderman Murphy asked about sidewalks which were not included for the Villas at Friendship Manor project. Chairman Levin stated that Commissioner Johnson had pointed out that the slope in that area was particularly steep and that it would be difficult to traverse for the elderly residents, especially during the winter. Commissioner Creger stated that he grew up in the neighborhood and that most people walked in the street during the winter due to snow plows piling snow onto the sidewalks which were so close to the street. He added that he was very much on favor of sidewalks but not in a hilly, dangerous place.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Oestreich reminded everyone about the APA Audio Conference on subdivisions next Wednesday at the Bi-State Regional Commission office.

Mr. Griffith reported that the public hearing for the Comprehensive Plan was scheduled for the April 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting and that no other items had been submitted for the agenda. He stated that Commissioners Johnson, Lopez, Oestreich and Peterson were up for re-appointment by the Mayor for another 3-year term and asked if they were willing to continue serving on the Planning Commission. He also stated that election of officers was scheduled for the May meeting.

Mr. Griffith reminded the Commissioners of their need to complete their Open Meetings Act (OMA) training as required by the State of Illinois, and to forward their certificates of completion to him. He concluded by asking the Commissioners to be mindful of any *ex parte* communications and to contact the Planning Office with any questions regarding any items on upcoming agendas.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no other business, Chairman Levin asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Oestreich made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 6:20 PM. Commissioner Creger seconded the motion. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission is Wednesday, April 2, 2014 at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Griffith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ben Griffith, AICP